

APPLICATION ACTIVITY: SYMMINGTON HEAD START

5-X



Job Performance
Situation 5:
Promoting the Vision of
Head Start

HEAD START
MOVING AHEAD
COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING PROGRAM



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REFERENCE

This activity develops skill competencies in *resolving unnecessary conflict* and *making presentations*. Participants will be able to take increased skill competencies in *making presentations* and *resolving unnecessary conflict*, apply these competencies to a specific Head Start job performance situation, and, finally, consider how the lessons learned can be applied to other Head Start work situations.

Related skill activities include 1–F, Individual Development: Developing Learning Plans; 5–C, Conflict Resolution: Understanding the Elements; and 5–D, Presentations: Developing Effective Presentations.

OVERVIEW

Application Activity: Symmington Head Start

Outcomes. Participants who complete this activity will practice the following skills:

- recognize symptoms, sources, and shapes of conflict
- recognize their personal style for handling conflict
- use a sequential process for assessing and resolving conflicts
- apply conflict-resolution skills to a Head Start situation
- plan and design a presentation
- use appropriate visual aids and support materials
- develop a graphic presentation of quantitative and qualitative evaluation data findings
- adapt and use good “platform skills”
- identify and overcome speaker fears
- critique a presentation

Recommended group size. Three to 15 participants, with at least one representative from each of these skill groups: 5–C, Conflict Resolution: Understanding the Elements; 5–D, Presentations: Developing Effective Presentations.

Components

This activity can be done in an informal group or a formal workshop.

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Step 1. Handout: Symmington Head Start: Scene 1 | 5 min. |
| Step 2. Worksheet: Case Analysis | 30 min. |
| Step 3. Handout: Symmington Head Start: Scene 2 | 5 min. |
| Step 4. Handout: Community Data | 10 min. |
| Step 5. Worksheet: Planning for and Outlining the Presentation | 45 min. |
| Step 6. Worksheet: Designing Graphics and Text | 20 min. |
| Step 7. Post-Assessment | 15 min. |
| Suggested total time | 2 hrs. 10 min. |

This activity contains 14 pages.

STEP 1. HANDOUT: SYMMINGTON HEAD START: SCENE 1



Suggested time: 5 min.

Read Scene 1, then go on to the Step 2 Worksheet.

Symmington Head Start serves about 1,200 children in a large city in the Midwest. Demand for full-time care is growing as increasing numbers of parents are either working or in training. Over the past eight months, the Head Start director and directors of numerous child-care programs in the city have been meeting on a regular but informal basis to explore ways in which they could work in partnership to provide full-day services. Thus Head Start could meet the changing needs of eligible families, and child-care programs could maintain full enrollment. At the last meeting the group decided it was time to take the next step toward a more formal relationship: they agreed to hold a meeting of all interested program directors as well as key managers and staff.

The purpose of this meeting will be to present the Head Start philosophy and approach to this wider audience (they expect 50 to 75 people). The planners agree that they need to highlight screenings and home-visiting protocols. These are tasks that child-care teachers will need to undertake if their programs contract to provide full-day education services to Head Start-eligible children. The Symmington Head Start director has asked the health manager to plan a presentation on screenings. The education manager and family service manager have been given the task of working as a team to plan and give a presentation on home-visiting protocols.

Martine, the family service manager, and Zoe, the education manager, had set aside times to begin their planning. But twice Zoe has had to cancel; first there was a crisis with one of her teachers and then a conflict with her son's baseball game. They finally met. It soon became clear, however, that although they have been assigned to work as a team, Martine and Zoe do not share a common viewpoint on home visiting.

"Good luck to these programs trying to get *their* teachers to go out on two home visits a year," says Zoe. "Especially now, with so many parents working or in training. Teachers aren't going to want to work past three o'clock. They have lives outside, after all, and how many parents are home before then? Or worse yet, go out at night! Some of these child-care programs are in pretty bad areas."

“Zoe,” Martine says patiently, “that is where the families live. If child-care programs agree to provide services for us, they will need to follow our guidelines.”

“Easy for you to say,” grumbles Zoe. “You don’t think it’s a little unfair that the Performance Standards require *two education* home visits¹ and have no minimum requirements for family service workers?”

“Maybe that’s because it’s understood that family service workers care about families,” Martine replies, losing her patience. “My advocates are in the neighborhoods, *all* the neighborhoods. And they are there often!”

¹ Head Start Performance Standards, 1304.40(i)(2).

STEP 2. WORKSHEET: CASE ANALYSIS



Suggested time: 30 min.

Part I (15 min.) Answer these questions on your own. You may wish to refer to 5–C, Conflict Resolution: Understanding the Elements.

1. What levels of conflict are Martine and Zoe experiencing: difference, disagreement, problem, dispute, battle? Explain your choice(s).

2. How would you characterize each person's style of handling conflict?

3. What are the issues as presented in the case?

4. Which of the following do you think is behind the conflict? Explain why.

___ misunderstandings or communication failures _____

___ value and goal differences _____

___ differences in methods and approaches to work _____

___ conflicting job roles and responsibilities _____

___ lack of cooperation _____

___ authority issues _____

___ noncompliance issues or differences in the interpretation of rules,
policies, or standards _____

5. What steps can Martine and Zoe take on their own to resolve their conflict?

6. What role could a third person, such as the program director, play in helping Martine and Zoe resolve the conflict?

Part II (15 min.) Join with others in your group to discuss your answers and why you chose them. Invite participants who completed the conflict resolution activity to share their insights.

**Stop! Please complete this Worksheet
before turning the page.**

STEP 3. HANDOUT: SYMMINGTON HEAD START (SCENE 2)



Suggested time: 5 min.

Read Scene 2, then go on to the following Handout and Worksheet.

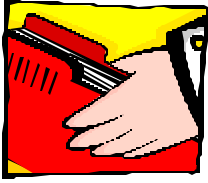
Martine and Zoe decide that they can agree to disagree personally. But if they are to work together on the presentation, they will need to overcome their differences. Neither wants to give up that opportunity. And truthfully, neither is interested in seeing this difference escalate into a more troubling or entrenched dispute that could make the work environment unpleasant for both of them.

Initially they set aside a meeting time to discuss the question (and both of them show up promptly). After that, however, they decide to meet with the program director.

“Well, it is our program policy that family service workers visit each family at least once a month,” says the program director. “And the home-visit regulations for teachers are there for a good reason—the intent is that the teacher visits will build a real rapport between the classroom and the home. I know that you get frustrated when teachers don’t follow through. But I also know that you truly believe in the intent of the standards, and that’s what I want you to convey to the group.”

She asks Zoe if it would be useful if Martine were to meet with the classroom teachers and present her service area’s view of the risks in the community along with strategies that promote safety on home visits. Zoe, while still complaining a bit about the time the home visits take, seems to relax. Martine acknowledges that for classroom teachers, making home visits may seem like extra work, whereas for family advocates, it is their main job.

“Well, I’d suggest that you review some of the data on characteristics of families and the community assessment data. And you can look at the performance standards, too. I think you’ll find a lot of information you can use to support your argument and build a presentation.”



STEP 4. HANDOUT: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT DATA

Suggested time: 10 min.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The Symmington Head Start program director was involved in the process of expanding and updating the community assessment with directors of other programs administered by the CAP agency. The process was completed in September 1997 and reflects changes over the past three years.

The data collected give the following profile of the communities served by the Head Start program:

- 15 percent increase in families eligible for WIC program
- one community mental health center in the area with an average six-month wait for waiting-list clients
- 10 percent increase in the amount of violent crime (including domestic violence)
- 8 percent of past Head Start parents participate in parent-teacher conferences at the public schools
- 55 percent of parents in the Head Start program noted interest in addressing child behavior management issues
- 6 percent decrease in the number of hospital emergency room visits for primary care issues
- 5 percent of community service providers report having evening hours
- 10 percent increase in the number of low-birth-weight infants
- 20 percent increase in the number of children living with grandparents as their primary caretakers
- 2,156 child-care slots available for preschool-age children; there is a child-care waiting list of 400
- 15 percent increase in the number of children with developmental delays at entry to public school

STEP 5. WORKSHEET: PLANNING FOR AND OUTLINING THE PRESENTATION



Suggested time: 45 min.

Part I (5 min.) Referring again to Scene 2 of Symmington Head Start, think of the presentation that Zoe and Martine plan to make to a group of child-care providers. To the best of your knowledge, fill in the answers below.

1. The audience

size of the group _____

their age and gender _____

their education and occupation _____

their cultural and ethnic background _____

something about their attitudes and values _____

their reasons for attending _____

past reactions they have had to the topic _____

any specific audience challenges _____

2. The setting

size and style of the room _____

time of the presentation _____

anyone else you will share the stage with _____

3. The purpose of the presentation

4. Implications of *audience* facts

5. Implications of *setting* facts

Part II (20 min.) Outline the presentation for this audience and setting, drawing on the Step 4 Handout.

1. Possible opener: _____

Planning check: Tone? Length? Relevance to audience?

2. Body of the presentation (3 to 5 main segments)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

Planning check: Tone? Length? Relevance to audience?

Local anecdotes and illustrations:

3. Visual aids (check those that you'll use; specify details)

slides _____

transparencies _____

newsprint _____

videos _____

handouts _____

props _____

Part III (10 min.) In pairs or small groups, exchange your notes on planning a presentation and ask for a critique and comments on your plans. Ask other participants to (1) tell you two things that they think sound like good ideas and (2) describe two areas in which they have questions or concerns.



STEP 6. WORKSHEET: DESIGNING GRAPHICS AND TEXT

Suggested time: 20 min.

Using the information in the Step 4 Handout, create a title and charts that graphically depict the key information. Specify the type of visual aid you will use.

STEP 7. POST-ASSESSMENT

Suggested time: 15 min.

The skill-development exercises and the Application Activity in Job Performance Situation 5 were designed to keep you building skills in the areas of conflict resolution and presentations. This Post-Assessment will help you reevaluate your competencies.

Part I

I completed the following exercises in Job Performance Situation 5:

_____ 5-B, The Performance Situation Activity: Promoting the Vision of Head Start

_____ 5-C, Conflict Resolution: Understanding the Elements

_____ 5-D, Presentations: Developing Effective Presentations

Part II

Rate your current skills in the following areas:

SKILL: *BUILDING CONSENSUS*

Rate your current skills in situations in which you need to

| | New skill for me | | Some skill | | Highly skilled |
|--|------------------|---|------------|---|----------------|
| 1. <i>Describe the elements of conflict:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. <i>Recognize different personal styles for handling conflict:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. <i>Use strategies that take advantage of your natural style:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. <i>Understand basic skills for preventing and resolving unnecessary conflict:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. <i>Apply conflict resolution skills to a Head Start situation:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SKILL: *DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS*

Rate your current skills in addressing situations in which you need to

| | New skill for me | | Some skill | | Highly skilled |
|---|------------------|---|------------|---|----------------|
| 1. <i>Plan and design a presentation:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. <i>Use appropriate visual aids and support materials:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. <i>Develop a graphic presentation of quantitative and qualitative data findings:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. <i>Adapt and use good platform skills:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. <i>Identify and overcome speaker fears:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. <i>Critique a presentation:</i> | | | | | |

Part III Use your answers to the following questions to finish filling in your Learning Plan for Job Performance Situation 5 (at the end of 5–A).

A. In which competencies would you like to continue your skill building?

B. What steps will you take to continue your skill building in these areas?

C. How can managers, your supervisor, team members, and other colleagues support you in your continued skill development?